Construction of bypass roads on National Highways

366. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the policy and the priorities for construction of by-pass roads on National Highways during the Eighth Plan with details;

(b) what are the details of proposals from Maharashtra with project-wise locations pending consideration of the Central Government;

(c) what are the details of action taken/proposed to be taken including private participations by locals or foreign investors; and

(d) what are the details of targets fixed for Maharashtra during the Eighth Plan period to avoide congestion and mounting fatal accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Bypasses are taken up on the National Highway system depending on traffic intensity, congestion along the existing route, finalisation of bypass alignment, land acquisition for the purpose, availability of funds etc. Owing to resource crunch in the Eighth Five Year Plan, bypasses are being generally a low priority.

(b) to (d) There has been no target fixed for the construction of bypasses in any State including Maharashtra in the Eighth Five Year Plan, since the question is mainly dependent upon availability of land for the bypasses, removal of utility services, cutting of trees, resources available etc. Construction of Peth Bypass on NH 50 has been stanctioned during the current year. Due to financial constraints it is too early to indicate which other bypasses could be taken up in remaining years of the Eighth Plan. However, a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) has been signed for construction of bypass at Panvel on National Highway No 4 to be undertaken by I.L. and F.S. (Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services) on BOT (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis under privatisation policy of the Government.

Making National Highway No. 1 from Delhi to Ambala into four lane

367. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what was the date of commencement of work and the Finances allocated by Government to convert National Highway No. 1 from Delhi to Ambala into a Four Lane one at the time of commencement;

(b) whether the work has not been completed so far;

(c) if so, the progress made in this regard;

(d) what is the amount of utilisation so far on this project and by when it will be completed alongwith the amount likely to be incurred;

(e) whether Government have made provided the necessary amount in the Eighth Plan to immediately complete this work; and

(f) if not how much escalation took place since commencement of the work in 1986?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Delhi to Murthal Section of Delhi-Ambala Road, N.H.I. is already 4 lane wide. Work of 4 laning Murthal-Karnal Section (km. 50 to 132) was started in 1987. Work is yet to be started in the Section beyond km. 132 to Ambala.

(c) and (d) Progress of work on Murthal-Karnal section which is targetted to be completed by December, 1995 is 13 per cent an expenditure of Rs. 13.90 crores upto January, 1993 out of total likely cost of Rs. 54.75 crores at present rates.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Use of Battery operated Vehicles

368. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take steps to encourage the use of battery operated vehicles based on compressed natural gases;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to fix a ceiling of 20 years on the age of commercial vehicles; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Government are encouraging battery operated vehicles based on secondary batteries. Financial assistance is being provided to Government/Public Sector/Private Sector registered organisations for purchase of these vehicles at the rate of Rs. one lakh per vehicle for passenger model and Rs. 50,000 per vehicle for industrial model. To promote the use of battery vehicles 100 per cent depreciation rate for the battery vehicles in the first year itself is allowed.

(c) and (d) Government have not taken a final decision in the matter.

Construction of Roads of Private Sectors

369. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to treat road construction as core sector to enable private sector to secure concessional finance from banks and to give a filling to road construction; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An amendment has been made in the Acts governing Industrial Development Bank of India by which the activity of development, maintainance and construction of roads has been specified to be an "industrial concern" so as to enable private sector to secure finance from financial institutions.

Projects of Calcutta Port Trust

370. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 4550 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19th August, 1992 and state:

Impact Assessment/Environment Management Plan submitted or likely to be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and the details of clearance received from CIT, CMC and DFC in the matter;

(b) whether it is a fact that Calcutta Port Trust in a bid to secure assistance has offered huge number of proposed flats to Government of West Bengal at a lesser or appropriate price but much higher rates are being charged from the general buyers;

(c) whether these projects would really cause health and traffic hazards